



THE mEMo



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State Escapes Most of Sandy's Wrath Outer Banks Takes Hit

By Julia Jarema, NCDPS Communications

A week before Hurricane Sandy struck the Atlantic Coast, North Carolina's Emergency Management team was monitoring the forecast and bracing for what looked to be a powerful storm with impacts at both ends of the state.

The storm was still in the Caribbean and not yet named, but for Doug Hoell, it was reminiscent of the winter storm of 1993.

"We're going to have to watch this one," cautioned Hoell, the state emergency management director. "This storm is lining up just like the 'storm of the century' which delivered a powerful punch to our state."

As the storm crawled north, coastal states from North Carolina to Maine braced for heavy rain, powerful winds, severe storm surge and significant snowfall.

Gov. Bev Perdue declared a State of Emergency Oct. 27 for 40 counties in eastern North Carolina stretching from Interstate 95 to the coast. The declaration authorized officials to quickly deploy state government resources to assist local governments with storm response and recovery efforts. The state and 10 counties activated their Emergency Operations Centers in preparation for the storm and warned residents to monitor the weather and update their emergency kits and plans. Meanwhile, North Carolina Emergency Management officials took several other steps to help ensure the state was ready:

- Established coordination with the National Hurricane Center and National Weather Service to discuss Sandy's potential impacts.
- Prepositioned 75 North Carolina National Guard soldiers to respond to the storm if needed.



Local officials assess storm damage as Hurricane Sandy churns up the Atlantic Coast.

The Outer Banks incurred the most damage from Sandy in North Carolina.



- Brought in a team of Federal Emergency Management Agency employees to provide immediate federal support to the state if warranted.
- Checked and updated equipment and supplies at the emergency management warehouse (water, pre-packaged meals, cots, blankets, generators, etc.)

As the storm moved closer, meteorologists predicted several days of steady winds as high as 30 to 40 mph with gusts up to 60 mph and 3 – 7 inches of rain along coastal counties. Residents along the coast and sound were told to prepare for storm surge of 1 – 5 feet above ground level. Meanwhile, mountain counties were told to expect 4 – 8 inches of snow with up to 12 inches on mountain peaks. They also were told to prepare for strong winds of 35 mph with gusts up to 65 mph.

Fortunately for North Carolinians, Sandy meandered north before making a western jog, making landfall along New Jersey's coast late Oct.29. The storm's final track lessened the impacts to North Carolina, but hammered much of the northeast wiping out roads, bridges, rail lines, commuter corridors and knocking out power to more than 8 million homes and businesses from North Carolina to New Hampshire.

In comparison to other states, the storm's impacts on the Tar Heel state were relatively minor. Sandy's damage to North Carolina was largely confined to the Outer Banks, as well as the sound side of Dare County. Two deaths in North Carolina were attributed to the storm. At the peak of the storm, four shelters were opened, housing nearly 40 people and there were nearly 30,000 power outages. The state's delicate coastal highway, N.C. 12, took its usual beating, but the temporary bridge installed after Hurricane Irene stood firm. Still, Gov. Perdue requested help from the Small Business Administration to help residents in the impacted areas recover.

To help Hurricane Sandy survivors in other states, on Nov. 2 Gov. Perdue activated the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund to accept donations to support recovery efforts in Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington, DC and West Virginia. The fund is managed by the governor's office in coordination with the United Way. Donations can be made via www.ncdisasterrelief.org.

North Carolina Storm Facts Hurricane Sandy

Deaths: 2

Shelters Open: 4 - housing 39 people

Power Outages:30,000 (at peak)

Emergency Operations Centers
activated: 10 counties + NCEOC

States of Emergency declared:
7 county declarations;
State declaration for 40 eastern &
24 western counties

Aerial photo of Dare County damage caused by Hurricane Sandy October 27-30.



In addition, various North Carolina resources were deployed to assist in the recovery effort:

- Duke and Progress Energy sent 1,250 employees and contractors from the Carolinas to help with Sandy recovery.
- Three UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters and 20 soldiers and airmen from the NCNG flew relief missions from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., in support of FEMA. The team helped with search and recovery efforts, moved supplies and conducted damage assessment.
- Four National Guard aviators from Morrisville led an Aviation Task Force made up of six UH-60s and two CH-47 Chinooks from around the country.
- One N.C. National Guard C-130 cargo aircraft and its six-person crew ferried relief supplies to New Castle, Del.
- National Guard bases in Charlotte and Morrisville continue to serve as staging areas for aircraft and personnel en route to the disaster zone.
- Three swift-water rescue teams from fire departments in Charlotte, Greensboro and Raleigh deployed to Maryland to help with rescue efforts.
- Ten North Carolina-based mobile feeding vehicles from the American Red Cross and more than 150 trained disaster volunteers from North Carolina are working in several Northeast and mid-Atlantic states helping with sheltering, feeding and other relief activities.
- Approximately 125 volunteers from N.C. Baptist Men Disaster Relief are working in New Jersey towns of Lumberton, Toms River and Rutgers. The Baptist Men are operating two mobile field kitchens in New Jersey. Laundry units, shower units and bunk trailers are also deployed with the North Carolina Baptist volunteers.

“We were lucky this time,” said Doug Hoell. “But it’s always better to be well prepared than sorry.”

Aerial photo of Dare County flood damage caused by Hurricane Sandy.



Review of 2012 NCEMA Fall Conference

By Gary Jones, NCEMA Executive Director

Last month, nearly 300 people attended the annual North Carolina Emergency Management Association Fall Conference in Hickory. Participants included keynote speaker North Carolina Department of Labor Commissioner Cherie Berry who provided an informative and thought provoking discussion of her department's day-to-day operations, as well as its activities during times of disaster.

Charlotte Fire Department Deputy Chief Jeff Dulin discussed his city's planning efforts and activities associated with the 2012 Democratic National Convention, while Norma Houston, from the UNC School of Government, focused on legal issues that concern the emergency management community. State Emergency Response Commission member Larry Perkins spoke on emergency planning concerns associated with large public venues.

The conference also highlighted local emergencies, that were not large enough to qualify for a disaster declaration, yet still could cause serious difficulties for a community. This included a look at the flooding of a county public health department building and stopgap efforts to provide continuing community health services, concerns over water outages and restrictions at medical facilities and an overview of the North Carolina Zoological Park's emergency response procedures for animal escapes.

Other presentations looked into new technology affecting our response community, historical preservation during disasters and emergency management issues associated with oil and gas exploration, through a process known as fracking. In addition, several speakers focused on local emergency planning activities and a number of the sessions examined recent (or potential) agency reorganizations within our overall preparedness structure.

State Emergency Management staff provided timely updates on: the evolving Community Emergency Response Team program, local hazardous materials planning concerns, the statewide exercise program, and a number of best practices within local hazard mitigation programs.

New Board Elected for NCEMA

New NCEMA officers were selected during the fall conference. The 2013 leadership team includes:

President	Angie Ledford, Buncombe County
1 st Vice Pres.	Jo Ann Smith, Carteret County
2 nd Vice Pres.	Don Campbell, Guilford County
Secretary	Robin Shaver, Stanley County
Treasurer	Suzanne Hamby, Wilkes County
Chaplain	Steve Hale, Rockingham County (lifetime member)

During the fall conference banquet, Gordon Deno was recognized for his leadership and service during his tenure as president of the Association for 2011-2012.

Looking for Photos?

Pictures and presentations from the conference will be posted on the NCEMA website

<https://ncema.renci.org/default.aspx>.

North Carolina Emergency Management Association Awards

The following individuals were recognized at the 2012 North Carolina Emergency Management Association Fall Conference for their outstanding achievements.

Lu Hickey, Johnston County human services director and public information officer, was awarded the *James F. Buffalo Award* for outstanding support and leadership to emergency management agencies. This award is presented annually to someone outside of the emergency management community.

Lonnie Hill, multi-hazard field planner in the NCEM Eastern Branch Office, received the *Colonel William A. Thompson Award*. The award is presented annually to a N.C. Emergency Management employee for demonstrating outstanding achievement in assisting local emergency management coordinators with programs, incidents and information.

Kristen Skinner of the New Hanover County Emergency Management Office received the *Vance E. Kee Award*. This achievement is presented to the local emergency management staff member who demonstrates outstanding achievements in their local program by promoting emergency management among other county and state agencies and elected officials.

Tony Tucker, Chatham County emergency management director, was awarded the *Colonel Phillip Nichlos Waters Award* which is presented to the local emergency management coordinator/director who demonstrates outstanding achievement in their local emergency management program and contributes to the overall good and advancement of the emergency management system in the state.

Gary Jones, executive director with the North Carolina Emergency Management Association, received the NCEMA President's Award for his dedication, support and contributions to the association beyond what was required. Outgoing NCEMA President Gordon Deno made the presentation to Jones as one of his last acts as association president.



Lu Hickey (left) and Lonnie Hill received the James Buffalo and Colonel Thompson awards, respectively at the NCEMA conference for their outstanding achievements in emergency management.

Below: Kristin Skinner (center) was recognized for her contributions in New Hanover County. She is joined by the county's Emergency Management Director Warren Lee (left) and Assistant Director Steven Still.



Below left: Tony Tucker received the Waters Award for his leadership in emergency management at the local level. Gary Jones was awarded the NCEMA President's award for his contributions to the association.

